

"More and more people are turning to the Internet as their first information resource and it's important that my office provides an informative and easy-to-use web site for these users. Our office has worked hard to integrate a helpful web site into our more traditional outreach efforts, all with the goal of providing the best constituent services possible for the people of the Central Coast. It's nice to receive some outside confirmation that our efforts are paying off," said Farr.

Farr's site, farr.house.gov, was one of 615 evaluated in the 2006 Gold Mouse Report: Recognizing the Best Web Sites on Capitol Hill, which analyzed congressional Web sites including those of all Senate and House Members, committees (both majority and minority sites), and official leadership sites. Eighty-five Web sites were cited in 2006, with 18 winning Gold, 27 winning Silver, and 40 winning Bronze Mouse Awards.

"One of the key purposes of the awards is to highlight best practices so offices can improve their sites by learning from those doing a good job," said Beverly Bell, executive director of the Congressional Management Foundation. "Web sites that garnered an Award in 2006 illustrate the best practices that we hope can serve as examples for others to follow."

"Rep. Farr's Web site shows that he has identified the needs of his various constituencies and has developed easily accessible content that meets their needs online," said Bell. "Rep. Farr is to be congratulated for being among the best of the best Web sites on Capitol Hill, and the Congressional Management Foundation is pleased to present Rep. Farr with the 2006 Silver Mouse Award."

Web sites were graded on how well they incorporate five basic building blocks: audience, content, usability, interactivity, and innovation. Using these building blocks, an evaluation framework was developed by CMF and their research partners that would be fair and objective, while still taking into account important qualitative factors that affect a visitor's experience on a Web site.

A full copy of the report, the 2006 Gold Mouse Report: Recognizing the Best Web Sites on Capitol Hill, is available on the Congressional Management Foundation's Web site at www.cmfweb.org.